Food trucks driving into the mainstream

Kristin Streetman
Staff Writer

Food trucks have been steadily increasing in popularity over the last decade or so, and they are slowly moving from hipster fad to mainstream trend. You can find food trucks in almost every city in America, even in little old Rock Hill. A 2012 forecast by Intuit Inc. said that the food truck industry is projected to account for approximately $2.7 billion in food revenue by 2017. Where did this food truck frenzy come from and what does it mean for Americans?

Food trucks are not a new creation. The origins of the mobile eateries can be traced back to food wagons in the 1800s. The first modern food truck (that was not an ice cream truck, ice cream trucks first appeared in the 1950s), was created in 1974 by Raul Martinez, as reported by Mobile Cuisine, a food truck trade magazine.

The issue with those food trucks, and largely the reason why they were not considered a mainstream fad is that they were considered by many to be cheap and dirty and were nicknamed "roach coaches." They were largely centered near construction site or blue color work sites. This all changed, however, with the 2008 recession.

Millennials in particular were looking for a cheap quick alternative to the more expensive sit down restaurants. Couple this need for cheap, on-the-go food and the rise in hipster culture which focused on the new and underground, the food truck industry boomed.

Fast forward to today and food trucks are no longer considered a novelty but a regular culinary scene for young people. In the surrounding areas there are two different weekly or biweekly food truck meet-ups called "Food Truck Fridays." One occurs in Charlotte and the other in Rock Hill.

Victoria Deatherage, a sophomore biology major, and Emily Leamy, a sophomore integrated marketing communication major, went to Food Truck Friday in November and had nothing but great things to say about the food truck culture as a whole.

"I like food trucks because they offer the community a variety of different foods to try and enjoy; foods like Greek gyros to gourmet mac and cheese," Deatherage said.

Leamy seemed to really enjoy the diversity food trucks have about them.

"I like food truck Friday because it's different. It gets people out of restaurants and outside, with options of different foods to try. Also, all the food truck owners are also super friendly and will discuss their ingredients and recipes with you," Leamy said.

Kristin Streetman / The Johnsonian

There still exists a sort of stigma surrounding food trucks in the older generations, but Millennials as a whole seem to greatly enjoy the trend. This means that in the coming years new food trucks will be created and the American culinary scene will continue to expand and evolve.

If you would like to check out some delicious local food trucks try Food Truck Friday - South End, in Charlotte or Food Truck Fridays at Fountain Park in Rock Hill (check online for dates and food truck listings).

Professor leaves WU for missionary work

Clayton Boone
Special to The Johnsonian

As a teenager riding in a tour bus in Russia with her youth group, Melanie Powley knew she wanted to become a full time missionary.

Powley, senior instructor of Family and Consumer Sciences at Winthrop University, recently announced that her and her family were moving to Montemorelos, Mexico to become missionaries in 2017.

Throughout Powley's life, she has been able to travel around the world with mission teams and developed a passion for serving others.

"I had the opportunity to go on mission trips since I was a teenager," Powley said.

With support from her church, Powley went to Russia while in high school. Before studying at Winthrop, Powley joined a missions' team and traveled to Portugal and throughout the United States.

Powley received her bachelor's degree in FACS and her master's degree in education from Winthrop.

Before returning back to her alma mater to teach, she taught FACS at Northwestern High School and South Pointe High School.

While teaching and starting a family were top priorities for Powley, the idea of becoming a missionary was always in the back of her mind.

"I felt like I was spinning my wheels not just with work but with life in general," Powley said. "I wanted something different, something more."

After reading "Radical" by David Platt, Powley was inspired to make her mission field in her neighborhood. She and her family opened her home and provided food for children who stayed in the neighborhood.

Her family would also provide meals for the elderly in their neighborhood.

After a few years of serving her community, her husband Dave approached her with the idea of mission work in Mexico. Her desire for missions had been answered.

Through prayers and research, Powley and her family paired with the Association of Baptists for World Evangelism and began to understand the steps to becoming a missionary. Before moving to Mexico, Powley and her family will study Spanish at a language school in Costa Rica.

"We get to pair with a missionary who is currently serving in Costa Rica and work with them everyday in their ministry," Powley said. "It is full immersion."

Throughout her eight years as an instructor, Powley has made many memories. When asked her favorite memory of Winthrop, she was able to distinguish one particular experience.

"The very first graduation I attended as a faculty member," Powley said. "I love seeing my students graduate and I like hearing what they are doing with employment."

The news of Powley's departure from Winthrop brought many emotions to faculty and students.

"I was happy and sad," said Helyne Frederick, program director of FACS at Winthrop University. "I know she is going to do something wonderful but the selfish part of me wishes she can be here at Winthrop to provide guidance for our program."

Students were thankful to have the opportunity to have Powley as guidance through their Winthrop experience.

"I have enjoyed the way she teaches and the ability she has to reach all students at different levels," said Tiffany Woodard, a senior FACS major specializing in adolescence studies. "I am going to miss the funny stories she tells in class to help remember content and the enthusiasm she brings to each class."

Courtesy of Melanie Powley

Powley and her family have created a website so that friends, family and supporters can see where they are financially in their journey.

Just as she knew she wanted to be a missionary on that tour bus in Russia, Powley is ready to commit to her dreams and reach the world.

WINTHROP EVENTS CALENDAR // Apr. 13 - Apr. 19

WED

- **Shore Stories- Drilling for Oil Off the S.C. Coast** — *Dina's Place, 6:30 PM - 7:30 PM*
- **Pro Black =/= Anti White** — *Owens Hall 102, 7:00 PM - 9:00 PM*
- **Ensemble Series: Winthrop Chamber Orchestra** — *Barnes Recital Hall, 7:30 PM - 8:30 PM*

THURS

- **National Crime Victims Week** — *Richardson Ballroom, 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM*
- **Woman's Empowerment Tour** — *Dina's Place, 10:30 AM - 12:30 PM*
- **Her Campus Presents Lip Sync for Success** — *Tillman Auditorium, 7:00 PM - 9:00 PM*

FRI

- **SpringFest** — *Campus Green, 2:00 PM - 4:00 PM*
- **Battle of The Bands** — *Amphitheater, 4:00 PM - 6:00 PM*
- **Spring One-Act Festival** — *Johnson Theatre J117, 8:00 PM - 10:00 PM (runs Friday - Sunday)*

SAT

- **SwaggerJack'd 2016** — *Byrnes Auditorium, 7:00 PM - 9:00 PM*

SUN

- **Ensemble Series: Winthrop Wind Symphony** — *Barnes Recital Hall, 4:00 PM - 5:00 PM*

MON

- **Book Drive** — *DIGS Main Lobby, 11:00 AM - 1:00 PM*
- **Ensemble Series: Winthrop Collegiate Choir** — *Barnes Recital Hall, 7:30 PM - 8:30 PM*

TUES

- **Autism Awareness** — *DIGS Main Lobby, 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM*
- **Food Truck Event** — *Campus Green, 11:00 AM - 2:00 PM*
- **Ensemble Series: Winthrop Chorale and Winthrop Chamber Singers** — *Byrnes Auditorium, 7:30 PM - 8:30 PM*

FOR FUN · CULTURAL EVENT · FILM · GALLERIES · DANCE · THEATER · MUSIC

This calendar may not represent all events on campus. More detailed calendar coming soon at mytjnow.com

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